

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Applicants submit below a complete listing of the current claims, including marked-up claims with insertions indicated by underlining and deletions indicated by strikeouts and/or double bracketing. This listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of the Claims

1. (Previously presented) A network device interaction system comprising:
a registry; and
a processor configured to execute a plurality of software components, the components comprising:
an application component that seeks to utilize a network device; and
a configuration component that automatically configures the network device to operate with the application component by:
receiving metadata for identifying the network device, the metadata comprising a hardware identifier for the network device;
determining configuration information using the hardware identifier for the network device, the configuration information indicating a configuration of the network device and comprising one or more registry keys; and
configuring the system with the configuration information, the configuring comprising setting, in association with the hardware identifier, the registry with the one or more registry keys from the configuration information.
2. (Previously presented) The system of claim 1, wherein the configuration information further comprises a device driver associated with the network device, and configuring the system further comprises loading the device driver.

3. (Previously presented) The system of claim 1, wherein configuring the system comprises setting the registry with the one or more registry keys, the one or more registry keys indicating a user preference.
4. (Original) The system of claim 2, wherein the device driver is loaded from a local data store.
5. (Original) The system of claim 2, wherein the device driver is downloaded over the Internet.
6. (Original) The system of claim 2, wherein the device driver is received from the network device.
7. (Original) The system of claim 2, wherein the device driver is retrieved from a computer readable medium.
8. (Original) The system of claim 2, wherein the device driver is retrieved from a computer over a local area network.
9. (Original) The system of claim 2, wherein configuration of the network device further comprises updating device firmware to a newer firmware version packaged with the device driver.
10. (Original) The system of claim 2, wherein configuration of the network device further comprises writing a copy of a most recent or current device driver package onto the network device.
- 11-26. (Canceled)
27. (Currently amended) A method of configuring a network device on a network for use with at least one other network device installed on the network, the method comprising:

associating the network device with the at least one other network device at least by authenticating the network device with respect to the at least one other network device using a credential;

in response to authenticating the network device, storing information for re-authenticating the network device;

locating a driver component associated with the network device;

retrieving the driver component; [[and]]

loading the driver component to facilitate installation of the network device;

detecting that the network device is no longer on the network; and

using the stored information for re-authenticating the network device to automatically re-associate the network device with the at least one other network device when the network device is reconnected to the network.

28. (Original) The method of claim 27, wherein the at least one other network device is a personal computer.

29. (Original) The method of claim 28, wherein locating a driver component comprises searching a local data store of the computer.

30. (Original) The method of claim 28, wherein locating a driver component comprises searching a remote server.

31. (Original) The method of claim 30, wherein searching a remote server is accomplished over the Internet.

32. (Original) The method of claim 27, wherein the driver component is retrieved from the network device.

33. (Canceled)

34. (Original) A computer readable medium having stored thereon computer executable instructions for carrying out the method of claim 27.

35-40. (Canceled)

41. (Previously presented) The method of claim 27, wherein the credential is an identification string and authenticating comprises receiving the credential through a user interface.

42. (Previously presented) The method of claim 27, wherein the credential is a certificate-based credential and authenticating comprises employing the certificate-based credential.

43. (Previously presented) The method of claim 27, further comprising establishing a secure, authenticated communications channel.

44. (Previously presented) The method of claim 43, further comprising encrypting communications between the network device and the at least one other network device over said communications channel.

45. (Previously presented) The method of claim 27, further comprising:
receiving metadata from the network device,
wherein the metadata is used in locating the driver component associated with the network device.

46. (Previously presented) The method of claim 27, further comprising detecting the network device on the network.

47. (Previously presented) The method of claim 46, wherein detecting comprises searching for the network device utilizing Simple Service Discovery Protocol (SSDP).

48. (Previously presented) The method of claim 46, wherein detecting comprises searching for the network device utilizing Web Services Discovery (WS-Discovery) Protocol.

49. (Previously presented) The method of claim 46, wherein detecting comprises passively receiving a notification from the network device that it is connected to the network.

50. (Previously presented) The method of claim 27, further comprising updating device firmware to a newer firmware version packaged with the device driver.

51. (Previously presented) The method of claim 27, further comprising setting one or more registry keys with configuration information for the network device.

52. (Previously presented) The method of claim 27, further comprising storing the credential on a computer-storage medium.

53. (Previously presented) The system of claim 1, wherein the configuration component is further configured to associate the network device with at least one other network device at least by authenticating the network device with respect to the at least one other network device using a credential.

54. (Previously presented) A computer-readable storage medium comprising computer-executable instructions that, when executed, perform a method of configuring a network device on a network for use with a computer on the network, the method comprising:

receiving metadata for identifying the network device, the metadata comprising an identifier for the network device;

associating the network device with the computer at least by authenticating the network device with respect to the at least one other network device using a credential;

determining configuration information for the network device using the identifier, the configuration information comprising driver files and one or more registry keys; and

configuring the network device with the configuration information, the configuring comprising:

- setting the one or more registry keys in a registry of the computer and in association with the identifier; and
- loading the driver files onto the computer.